

Message Text

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R 140057Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY RABAT

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 122753

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, LY, US

SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM'S CONVERSATION WITH LIBYAN
CHARGES GASHUT AND MADFA'I

1. FOLLOWING AN EXCHANGE OF PLEASANTRIES IN WELCOME/FAREWELL MEETING BETWEEN UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM AND LIBYAN CHARGES GASHUT AND MADFA'I MAY 5, NEWSOM REVIEWED POOR STATE OF U.S.-LIBYAN RELATIONS, POINTING OUT THAT LIBYA'S SUPPORT FOR TERRORISTS MAKES ANY IMPROVEMENT DIFFICULT. UNDER SECRETARY NEWSOM ALSO CITED LIBYA'S RECENT EFFORTS TO UNDERMINE NEIGHBORING GOVERNMENTS AND LIBYA'S OPPOSITION TO MIDDLE EAST PEACE EFFORTS AS ADDITIONAL PROBLEMS IN OUR RELATIONS. GASHUT DENIED LIBYA'S INVOLVEMENT WITH TERRORISTS AND CALLED FOR FRANK DIALOGUE, AGAIN PROFESSING LIBYA'S DESIRE FOR IMPROVED U.S.-LIBYAN TIES.

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2. TERRORISM: NEWSOM POINTED TO GROWING WORLDWIDE SENSITIVITY TO TERRORISM AND PROFOUND EFFECT LIBYA'S INVOLVEMENT HAD ON U.S. PUBLIC OPINION AND CONGRESS. GASHUT REPLIED THAT CHARGES OF LIBYAN INVOLVEMENT WITH TERRORISTS GROW OUT OF LIBYA'S SUPPORT FOR PALESTINIANS--"BUT WE CANNOT CONTROL EVERYTHING ALL PALESTINIANS DO--AND WE ARE NOT ALONE IN SUPPORT FOR PALESTINIANS". NEWSOM SAID LIBYAN TIES TO

TERRORISTS SEEMS TO GO BEYOND THE PALESTINE PROBLEM AND THE CAUSES OF ISLAM, CITING LIBYAN INVOLVEMENT WITH THE JAPANESE RED ARMY.

3. MIDDLE EAST: NEWSOM SPOKE OF OUR DIFFERING APPROACHES TO MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM, SAYING U.S. FEELS SADAT INITIATIVE IS VERY IMPORTANT. SADAT HAD ANSWERED CHARGE THAT ARABS WON'T NEGOTIATE. USG REGRETS THAT LIBYA IS MOST ACTIVE OF ARAB COUNTRIES IN UNDERMINING SADAT'S MISSION. MADFA'I RESPONDED THAT LIBYA WOULD ACCEPT A MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT WHICH IS "FAIR" TO PALESTINIANS.

4. DIALOGUE: GASHUT SAID USG HAD NOT RESPONDED TO LIBYAN EFFORTS TO IMPROVE RELATIONS AND CALLED FOR A FRANK DISCUSSION OF OUR DIFFERENCES WHICH COULD LEAD TO IMPROVED RELATIONS. IN THIS REGARD GASHUT SAID LIBYAN UN PERMREP KHIKHYA HAD BEEN UNABLE FOR PAST YEAR TO DELIVER A MESSAGE FROM QADHAFI TO PRESIDENT OR SECRETARY. NEWSOM SAID WE WELCOME OPPORTUNITY TO TALK AND WE ARE WILLING TO HEAR WHAT LIBYAN GOVERNMENT HAS TO SAY. VANCE

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